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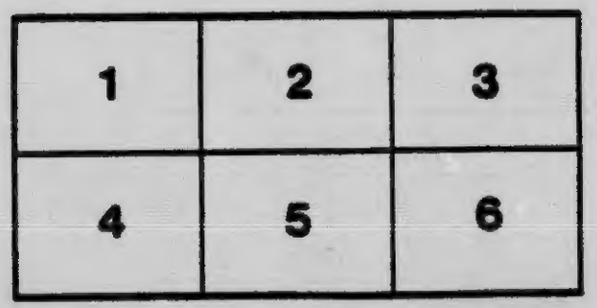

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1910-11

The Rosedale League
OF
School Art

The Rosedale League

OF

School Art

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List of Officers

1910-11

President - - - - - - -	Mrs. A. F. Rutter
1st Vice-President - -	Mrs. H. O'Hara
2nd " " - -	Mrs. J. Lillie
3rd " " - -	Mrs. F. N. Rannie
Treasurer - - - - - -	Mrs. F. G. Clarke
Cor.-Secretary - - - -	Mrs. J. P. Cleal
Curator - - - - -	Miss M. J. Bell
Rec.-Secretary - - - -	Miss A. F. Sims

The Rosedale League

OF

School Art

IN the year 1894, the then rather few residents of Rosedale found their children somewhat cut off from Public School privileges, and petitioned the Board of Education to provide the necessary school accommodation.

When it became known that a site had been secured, the Board was met by a counter petition from certain property holders, pleading that a school would prove prejudicial to property. The decision was in favor of the children and a four-roomed building was erected, outwardly resembling, as far as possible, a private dwelling.

At the formal opening on January 17, 1896, Mr. James L. Hughes, Inspector of Schools, suggested that, following a line of work introduced in certain districts of England by John Ruskin, and adopted also in Boston, U.S., the ladies of Rosedale should form a League to

superintend the interior decoration of the school, in the belief that, class-rooms made as attractive and beautiful as was consistent with their purpose, must exert a refining and elevating influence on the characters of the pupils.

Mr. C. A. B. Brown, a member of the Board of Education, nominated fifteen ladies residing in the district, and moved that they be a committee to form the League. It was not until May that this committee met, each lady fearing the responsibility of convening. Then Mrs. J. H. Thom, a lady having no children in the school but love of all children in her heart, consented to convene, and on the 27th of the month, a little band of five ladies, Mrs. Thom, Mrs. Mower-Martin, Mrs. C. H. Rust, Mrs. J. Denovan and Mrs. Gordon met and, with the staff of the school, proceeded to consider ways and means of raising funds for the work.

It was decided to hold an At Home in the school, provided the Board of Education would grant the use of the building. This request was graciously granted, and, to the credit of the Board be it recorded, that the attitude of its members to the work of the League has always been one of interest and ~~happiness~~. helpfulness

This committee of five next undertook to secure members and in March, 1897, the certified list numbered forty-nine. On the twenty-fifth of that month a meeting was called for the proper organization of the League and

election of officers. This resulted in the election of Mrs. J. H. Thom as President, Mrs. R. H. Bowes as first Vice-President, Mrs. C. H. Rust as second Vice-President, Mrs. Arthur Cox, Corresponding Secretary, Miss Sims, Recording Secretary, and Mrs. R. H. Montgomery, Treasurer.

In the fourteen years of the League's history, there have been but five Presidents. Mrs. Thom filled the position most acceptably for four years and was followed in succession by Mrs. Arthur Cox, Mrs. Henry O'Hara, Miss A. F. Sims and Mrs. A. F. Rutter, the present President, who has ably filled the office since 1907.

Immediately on organization, the League undertook, by means of lectures, concerts and other forms of entertainment to raise funds, and the interest, enthusiasm and harmony that marked the first efforts have never ceased to be marked characteristics of the League.

In November of that year a number of fine engravings were purchased, and the League was confronted with the difficulty of having no suitable walls whereon to hang them; for it was then thought proper to cover every square foot of wall space within reach, and many beyond reach, with liquid slate of blackest hue. To hang on this blackboard background ruined the picture; to hang above it placed the pictures quite beyond the reach of children's eyes.

The League then decided to turn their attention to walls, and they received from the Board of Education permission to re-model, entirely at their own expense, the Kindergarten room. The work was placed in the hands of a committee of artist-architects who freely gave their services, Mr. C. H. Acton Bond and Mr. Arthur Cox superintending the carrying out of the plans.

The simplest woodwork was put in; burlap, then a novelty, was used for wainscotting; wall spaces and mouldings were made in perfect proportions; a harmonious scheme of color, suitable to a north room and small children, was used on walls and ceiling, burlap curtains were hung at cloakroom doors,—the whole resulting in a room beautiful in its simplicity, restful in its harmony and bright for the child-life that spent hours each day within it. All this cost considerable thought, work, and money, but the League reaped abundant satisfaction.

At the same time the other schoolrooms were made attractive by covering superfluous blackboard spaces with wall paper of the same tint as the calsomine, thus giving suitable background for pictures. Dainty sash curtains were hung at all windows and the school began to assume a home-like appearance.

In 1906 it became necessary to double the size of the building, and the Superintendent of Buildings, Mr. C. H. Bishop, planned a kindergarten room sufficiently

spacious for school closings and other public meetings. This room, the League enthusiastically decided, should be made the most beautiful school room in Canada. Its measurements are fifty by forty feet. The north and south walls are broken by fine large windows admitting abundance of light and sunshine; the west wall is blank; the east wall opens by large sliding doors into the entrance hall. Three recessed panels in the west wall, each twelve feet by eight feet, afforded excellent opportunity for mural decoration, and in these have been placed three symbolic panels in oil, the work of Mr. J. W. Beatty, A.R.C.A. The first, "Spring in Nature and Life," pictures the Don Valley with kindergarten children at play. The second, "Summer," shows the wheat in sheaf, and father, mother and children sharing in field work and pleasure. The third is "Autumn" with trees clad in glorious reds, and, in the foreground, the stacked Indian corn and rich yellow pumpkins, while grandfather and grandmother, out for a stroll, receive an Autumn posey from the hands of a small boy.

The remaining walls are painted a soft green, woodwork, brown, wax finished; window hangings are in butter-colored linen simply stencilled in green, and cloakroom curtains are in green monkscloth. In the screen separating the room from the hall is a simple, but effective, design of Tudor roses in stained glass. In this room the League has completed its most ambitious undertaking, and connoisseurs have pronounced it good.

The record of work herein related does not cover all accomplished. As the years have passed, the League has added to its possessions a number of beautiful pictures, a piano, a platform with rug and platform furniture, chairs, and other equipments for making the school a centre of enjoyment for the suburb. The appreciation of the residents is evidenced by the large numbers that attend events held within its walls.

Before closing this sketch, warm gratitude requires that reference be made to valuable gifts donated by kind and interested friends. A full list of such is appended.

It is not possible to sum up in words all the results that flow from the subtle influences of good surroundings for children; but it can be truly said that the beliefs which animated the League at the beginning of the work have been amply sustained. The result that would appeal most forcibly to the public at large is the character established by the School throughout this most beautiful of the City's suburbs for good conduct on the streets, the protection of property, and also the protection of the trees, shrubs, gardens and lawns of the residents—and the fact that the nearest neighbors proclaim the school no detriment to property.

The President and members of the League feel that the completion of the decoration of the Kindergarten room marks an epoch in their work and affords fitting occasion for the presentation to the Board of Education, by Deed

of Gift, of the tangible results of their efforts. They believe that they are only at the beginning of this movement; and, while they will still carry on the work in the suburb of Rosedale, they express the earnest hope that those sections of the city where child-life has little or naught of beauty in the home may have the joy and refining influence of beauty in the schoolroom, and that the Board of Education and the citizens will speed the movement.

Gifts to the Rosedale League

1. Carbon Photo—"The Tiber and the Castle of Angelo." W. H. Elliott, Esq.
2. Carbon Photo—"The Roman Forum." James Ryrie, Esq.
3. Goupil-Process Engraving—"The Life Boat." R.Y. Ellis, Esq.
4. Original Crayon—"Muskoka Scene." T. Mower Martin, Esq.
5. Original Sepia—"Yacht in Storm." The late J. T. M. Burnside.
6. Autograph photo of Alexander MacLachlan. Arthur Cox, Esq.
7. Terra Cotta Busts of Brock and Tecumseh. The late Mrs. E. B. Osler.
8. Carbon Photo—"A French Peasant Woman." The Rosedale Association.
9. A Cuckoo Clock. Mrs. A. S. Rogers.
10. A case of Butterflies and Moths. Paul Hahn, Esq.
11. Carbon Photo—"St. Cecelia." Lieut. Ruggles George (old boy).
12. Large silk Union Jack. Mrs. A. F. Rutter.
13. Carbon Photo—"The Roman Forum." Mrs. A. F. Rutter.
14. Fifteen-inch model, in Italian marble, of the Temple of Vespasian. Mrs. A. F. Rutter.
15. Engraving—"The Aurora." Master Lumsden Cummings (old boy).
16. Engraving—"St. Michael and the Dragon." Miss A. F. Sims.